

## 15.301 - WRITING REQUIREMENT ASSIGNMENT

### Topic:

Despite the fact that we live in an increasingly technology-based world, there has been a decrease in the proportion of students in the United States (and many other countries) majoring in science and engineering. From what you have learned about attitudes and attitude change, discuss what the underlying reasons for this change in attitudes might be and design a national program to attract more young people into studying engineering and science.

### General Format:

- 8-10-page paper, double spaced, 1-inch margins, and 12-point standard font (times or times new roman)
- Use at least 2 sources outside of course material (library research).
- Include a bibliography/reference list.

### Submission instructions:

- The assignment requires two submissions: a draft mid-semester and a final version near end of semester (specific dates are listed in the syllabus).
- Your specific TA will instruct you regarding the place to hand in both submissions.
- You should hand in **two** copies of each submission (i.e. two copies of the draft and two copies of the final version. One copy will be used by the Writing TA and the other by your 15.301 TA. You will therefore receive comments from both TAs and both will be involved in the grading process.

### Grading Composition:

- This assignment comprises 10% of your overall grade in the course. 5% comes from your 15.301 TA grading the content of your paper, and 5% from the Writing TA grading your writing style. For content, you will receive a grade on your 1<sup>st</sup> draft and another on your final version, and they will be averaged. For writing style, you will receive comments on your 1<sup>st</sup> draft and a grade on your final version.

### Grading Criteria:

- The paper contains a descriptive and concise title.
- The paper contains a concise (150-200 words) Executive Summary/Abstract.
- The introduction provides context for the problem being examined, justifies the author's approach to the problem, and specifically describes the paper's focus.

- Organizational structure is logical and advances the argument consistently:
  - Problem is defined with ample detail and support and not overly generalized.
  - Causes of problem are described in both theoretical and practical terms.
  - Effects of problem are adequately detailed.
  - Solutions to problem are detailed and feasible.
  - Arguments against solution are offered and countered.
- Conclusion is appropriate to details presented (not overly generalized).
- Application of attitude-change theory is appropriate and central to the analysis, not tangential.
- Terms used are appropriately defined and concise.
- Tone is clear (not too distant or formal, avoids colloquialisms and dense idioms).
- Mechanical errors don't significantly detract from the reading experience.
- Paper contains the required number of references in correct APA format.
  - The direct link for the APA format is <http://web.mit.edu/21.guide/www/doc-apa.htm>
  - The general webpage for the Writing Center is <http://web.mit.edu/writing/> There you can also find links to discussions on grammar and style, and also the Writing Center's office hours and ways to make an appointment.
  - Besides the Writing Center's support, you can always contact your Writing TA.